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CALFED WATERSHED MANAGEMENT POLICY

January 3, 1997

The CALFED Bay-Delta Program supports watershed management as an integrated approach to restore and protect aquatic ecosystems with emphasis on fisheries, protect human health, enhance water supply, and improve water supply reliability, while protecting all beneficial uses of the waters of the San Francisco Bay/Sacramento-San Joaquin Delta Estuary. The Program supports collaborative decision-making at the local level, point source and non-point source pollution control programs, improvements in riparian habitat, improvements in fisheries habitat, watershed management for water supply, and the improvement of sources of drinking water taken from the Delta.

A primary role of CALFED is to coordinate the solution of Bay-Delta estuary problems on a large scale. The CALFED watershed management role will be an outgrowth of this concept, emphasizing the efforts of other public agency and private entities, and seeking to help coordinate these efforts on a regional basis, as appropriate to the defined boundaries of CALFED activities.

Examples of activities that may be candidates for CALFED involvement might include working with local stakeholders to implement erosion control projects to protect spawning habitat while improving water yield and base flows; or, to cooperate with local, state and federal entities in implementing projects to reduce pollutants in urban storm water.

In order to be consistent with the central CALFED mission of enhancing the Sacramento-San Joaquin Delta Estuary, emphasis for CALFED involvement will be placed on activities which have the most benefit to the estuary. Accordingly, the main river courses and side streams draining to the Bay-Delta Estuary, and downstream of the State Water Project, Central Valley Project, and other headwaters dams will be emphasized as solution areas. Other areas will be evaluated for study on a case-by-case basis.

CALFED will solicit advice from local, State and federal agencies to support cost-effective and cost-efficient watershed-based management programs. CALFED will support adopted State or federal policy or legal decisions regarding total maximum daily loading (TMDL) implementation. TMDLs are the maximum levels of pollutants that a given water body can receive from all sources within a watershed and still meet water quality standards. CALFED will participate in activities such as coordinating joint ambient monitoring programs to extend the useability of monitoring data while reducing monitoring costs, or assisting agreements for cost effective pollution control actions on a regional basis through such approaches as pollution credits and pollution load trading. In all such activities it will be the CALFED role to assist implementation of projects on a larger watershed scale than might be possible among local entities.

CALFED supports sound scientific investigations and pilot programs to develop and demonstrate methods for protecting and enhancing beneficial uses of the Bay-Delta Ecosystem. An important component of CALFED support for programs is to assure development of adequate technical documentation to support decision-making in a long-term adaptive management process.

CALFED watershed management activities will be fully coordinated with existing or new watershed management programs affecting the Bay Delta Estuary, including but not limited to, the State Water Resources Control Board's Sacramento River Watershed Program, the Sacramento County and City's Sacramento River Toxic Pollutant Control Program, the Regional Water Quality Control Board's Watershed Initiative Program, and the Sacramento Regional County Sanitation District's Sacramento River Toxic Pollutant Control Program.

Under the recently passed Proposition 204 and pending federal legislation, CALFED funding for watershed management activities may be available for various forms of financial participation with other agencies. Federal Clean Water Act and Central Valley Project Improvement Act Category III are among the potential sources of other funding for cooperative watershed efforts.

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